

# “Two hours extra for working from home”: Reporting on gender, space, and time from the Covid-field of Delhi, India

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## Abstract

This article explores, through the case study of Prachi, a young woman working for an e-commerce company in Delhi, India, the immediate and potential long-term gendered implications of the coronavirus disease-2019 pandemic. While one of the more “privileged” workers who did not lose her job during the crisis, Prachi had to suddenly and swiftly adapt to the practice of “work from home.” As a neophyte service worker with very limited infrastructure for working at home, Prachi experienced deterioration in her physical and mental health. While working long hours to keep her family afloat during this difficult time, she also had to negotiate the compulsion to participate in housework. Her employers’ distrust and increased surveillance has left her feeling vulnerable, particularly as a woman whose work is not given due recognition in the organization. Prachi’s account highlights that although the practice of work from home affords flexibility to workers, it can also result in the exacerbation of inequalities. This article outlines the need for closer examination of the gendered implications of work transitions during the pandemic.

## KEYWORDS

Covid-19, e-commerce, gender, India, work from home

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## 1 | INTRODUCTION: COVID-19 AND WORKERS IN THE NEW ECONOMY IN URBAN INDIA

On 24 March, 2020, the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the nation at 8:00 p.m. to announce a nation-wide lockdown, starting within the next 4 h at 12:00 a.m., for 21 days to contain the spread of coronavirus disease-2019 (Covid-19). The sudden imposition of the strict lockdown had disastrous consequences for “migrant” workers (EPW Editorial, 2020) who were stranded in cities without work, income, and means of transport to return to their villages. On the same day, Prachi<sup>1</sup> received a call from her manager, asking if she was prepared to “work from home” (WFH). Prachi is a 24-year-old woman who works for an e-commerce company that sells, among other things, health and care products. I have known Prachi since mid-2016, when I conducted fieldwork for my research on young lower middle class women's experiences in the new economy of Delhi (Islam, 2020b). Prachi lives in a two-room house in Dakshinpuri, a low-income neighborhood in South Delhi, with her parents and four siblings. One of my most articulate respondents, Prachi is a feisty feminist whose interpretive frameworks inform my understanding of emerging subjectivities among young lower middle class women in Delhi.

Prachi is arguably part of the emerging new middle classes in urban India, defined through aspirations towards new economy jobs and new consumption, which afford entry into global modernity (Dickey, 2012; Ganguly-Scrase & Scrase, 2009; Lukose, 2009). The discourse of an emerging “New Middle Class” is closely tied with the growth of the services sector in post-1990 urban India. Pursuing a program of economic liberalization through the late 1980s/early 1990s, India has shifted from agriculture to services as the majority contributor to its GDP. This shift is also symbolic of the country's “modernization,” particularly reflected in changes in youth culture, now characterized by smartphones, jeans, and jobs in MNCs. However, scholars have highlighted the unevenness of these transitions, benefiting the already secure middle and upper classes, and pushing lower middle classes into precarious private service work (Fernandes, 2006; Ganguly-Scrase, 2003).

Prachi's current employment is with a small e-commerce start-up selling a wide range of consumables. This largely nondescript company is one of many emerging e-commerce operations in the country. According to the India Brand Equity Foundation (a Trust of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India), the Indian e-commerce sector is the most rapidly expanding in the world growing at the annual rate of 51% (also see Pricewaterhouse coopers (PWC), 2018). Furthermore, it is projected to continue growing as online shopping has gained popularity during the Covid-19 lockdown. Prachi's employer (and hence, her employment) survived the crisis because their operations were already online and because they sell health products that they further capitalized upon by starting sales of hand sanitizers. However, new to the practice of “work from home,” Prachi had to deal with limited infrastructure, increased workload, hypersurveillance from her employers, and restricted access to space and time for herself.

In this article, I present the reflections that Prachi shared with me in an in-person interview, lasting around an hour and a half. These reflections are situated in the wider context of issues of gender and work during the lockdown. They disrupt the understanding of “work from home” as a family-friendly policy that is beneficial for women's careers, highlighting that in the absence of supportive infrastructures, the flexibility of working from home can be experienced as limiting by women workers. I briefly discuss the gendered implications of the practice of working from home, particularly in light of recent work transitions due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Next, I provide a longer life and work history for Prachi and the context in which I conducted the interview that this article is based on. Then, I discuss the main themes that emerged from the interview, concluding with discussion of these themes and suggestions for future research.

## 2 | WFH AND GENDER

The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic compelled many workers all around the world to suddenly switch to WFH. It is only stating the obvious, but it is still important to note so we do not overestimate the scale and significance of WFH, that for many workers in low-paid positions, such as, cleaners, supermarket shelf stackers, hospitality staff,

this was not an option. In the UK, the practice was also not entirely new for workers whose work could be carried out from home. The momentum for WFH has been gaining traction for over two decades, but the pandemic has provided a powerful boost, with the Office for National Statistics estimating that in April 2020, almost half of all the people in employment were WFH, and of these, 86% were doing so because of the pandemic (Office for National Statistics, 2020, p. 11). The popularity of the practice during the pandemic has led to re-evaluation of work practices and may lead to long-term changes in the way people work in the UK.

Before the pandemic boosted the uptake of WFH, it was primarily one of the “family friendly policies” focused on retaining and supporting “working mothers.” While modern workplaces have also encouraged it as a strategy to enhance job satisfaction among employees regardless of gender, scholars have noted that the ways in which WFH blurs the boundaries between work and home make it gendered. Women still take on a disproportionate amount of housework and care work, which may be further intensified when working from the space of home, particularly amidst a global crisis (Graves, 2020). For example, analyses of recent academic output suggest that publishing rate across various disciplines has fallen for women relative to men (Viglione, 2020). Therefore, there is need for caution in assessing the potential of WFH for creating a gender-equal future of work.

In India, the proportion of people WFH is unknown but my preliminary research with young lower middle class women in Delhi suggests that it is expanding beyond the precincts of multinational corporations. With a large informal economy, which women are predominantly employed in (Samantroy, 2019), including home-based piece work, such as, lacemaking, embroidering, manufacture of machine parts, the home as the site for work is not necessarily new in India. However, while home-based work tends to be undertaken as a subsidiary activity in the household, the “modern” practice of WFH is understood as a stand-alone rather than merely a supplementary activity. There is extensive literature on the “housewifeization” of women in home-based work (Mies, 1982), but there has been little research on the impact of transitions to WFH for women workers in India.

### 3 | ABOUT THE INTERVIEW

I met Prachi on several occasions between July and September 2020, when India was going through augmenting phases of “unlocking” the lockdown. I first came across Prachi in mid-2016 at a café in South Delhi. I was, at the time, conducting research on young women's experiences of employment in the new economy of Delhi, and asked Prachi if she, as a café worker, would be willing to speak to me. Prachi is a neophyte worker in the expanding service economy. Her mother used to work as a domestic worker while her father has experienced long-term unemployment. Currently pursuing a Master's degree through distance learning, Prachi's qualifications surpass those of her parents. On the basis of her education and skills in computers, data management software, and English-speaking, Prachi has been able to enter service work.

I have followed Prachi's life over the last 4 years. In this time, Prachi has switched a number of jobs—in late 2016, she resigned from the café after an argument with the manager and was unemployed for almost half a year before finding a job in a tourism agency; after a few months, she fell ill and unable to return to the tourism agency job, she applied for a number of personal assistant positions; she eventually found work in an e-commerce company in the summer of 2019, where she is still employed. Prachi's role involves coordinating between customers who place online orders and courier companies who are responsible for delivering orders.

Prachi had told me over WhatsApp that her employer had asked her to WFH during the lockdown. I was curious about her experience because my previous research has suggested that women value work as a means to escape from home (Islam, 2020a). Furthermore, Prachi, and other lower middle class workers like her, do not have the infrastructure—space, Internet connection, laptop—required for WFH. Indeed, my previous research has also suggested that lower middle class workers desire “computer jobs” in part for the material culture of an air-conditioned office space with desks and computers. It was in this context that I asked Prachi to share her experiences of WFH and this article outlines some of the main themes that emerged out of my conversations with her.

#### 4 | “I JUST HAD A TABLE AND A CHAIR”: IMPLICATIONS OF INFRASTRUCTURE DEFICIT IN WORKING FROM HOME

Over the time I have known Prachi, she has managed to transition to work that is desirable in the material culture that it offers. She works in a typical office space, where she has her own desk and a laptop. However, even as she has secured a “computer job,” her home environment has remained largely unchanged. Her seven-member family lives in a two-room house in the neighborhood of Dakshinpuri in South Delhi. She does not have a laptop of her own, there is no broadband connection, and she shares her smartphone with her siblings. Recognizing that their employees do not have the requisite infrastructure to WFH, Prachi's employer arranged delivery of laptops and work phones to them to enable continuity of work during the lockdown. They also added credit to their phones for data usage. What the employers could not provide was efficiency of connectivity—data coverage tends to be patchy in parts of Dakshinpuri. Prachi reported difficulties in accessing Internet; she was communicating with her teammates on a WhatsApp group where they posted “Net is not working” whenever they experienced loss of connectivity. Because of intermittent loss of Internet, the work took longer to do—“...I had to always finish work for the day, so no matter how late it would get, even to 10 pm, I had to keep working and only log out when everything was done.”

The loss of office space and the sudden shift to working from home had significant implications for Prachi and her family. During the lockdown, only Prachi was working from home. Her siblings, on the other hand, were “...doing timepass, they were watching movies, they were enjoying too, trying different things.” In this crowded space, where her siblings did not adapt well to the unexpected intrusion of work into their home space, she had to train her mind to zone out in order to focus on work:

P: In the beginning, I was working separately in the room upstairs, then I started working downstairs only. The room upstairs doesn't have an air conditioner and it was really hot. But I had to do it. Customers would call, you can't keep telling people at home to shut up, when they're at home, there will be noise, I had made it into an office but for them it was home. Customers would call or boss would call, someone would be shouting in the background.

Me: So how did you manage then?

P: Don't ask! Sometimes I would sit separately, sometimes I would put the call on mute, sometimes I'd tell them to shut up. They'd look at me, that I do this every day...Our work was such that you'd just go into this working zone, I got used to looking at the laptop.

Prachi spent long hours working at a table and chair in the room with the rest of her family—“I would get up, wash my face, start working on the laptop. Shut the laptop, have lunch, sometimes I would eat while working, sometimes there was no time to eat.” She reported getting backache, but she did not have the time or the resources to manage the physical health implications of long hours of work in a small space. While she had trained herself to zone out in order to focus on her work, she also felt ill from not being able to step out of the house:

P: “Yes, at one point, I just felt crazy, that I wanted to go out of the house, I couldn't take it anymore, it felt like I had exceeded, I had to go out of the house. People were in these situations. I was working, so my mind was busy, I didn't have the time to think about anything else but other family members were fighting among themselves, many people had these issues, you can't stay at home. But if you go out, then police come after you...I didn't go anywhere during the whole lockdown.

Prachi's emphasis that "you can't stay at home" resonates with my earlier research findings that show that young women value work as a way to escape the space and norms of home (Islam, 2020a). Using the motif of "boredom," young women characterized home as boring, highlighting that if they "sit at home," they face pressure to participate in housework and restrictions on their mobility. During the lockdown, as it became nearly impossible to escape from home, I wondered if my respondents were reconsidering the value of work or if work within the home still offered them a temporary escape from home life. Prachi's experience suggests that she struggled with the confinement at home, unable to avoid family conflicts, and create a suitable work environment for herself. This had implications for her physical and mental health. Recognizing that she could not compel her family to understand and support this transition to WFH, Prachi detached herself from home by creating a work zone in her own mind.

## 5 | "THEY THINK WE'RE RESTING, NOT WORKING": HYPERSURVEILLANCE AND EMPLOYEES' SUBVERSION STRATEGIES

For online work, Prachi's employer instituted a multitier monitoring system. All the employees were added to a WhatsApp chat group, where they could discuss work-related issues, including when they experienced loss of Internet connectivity. They had to enter their log in and log out time in a Google Sheet. And the employer accessed their call logs to calculate the time they have spent talking to customers. This kind of surveillance had, of course, not been needed previously when all the workers were in the office. Prachi disagreed with her employer's approach since it made the employees feel mistrusted and devalued, particularly at a time when they were all trying to do their best to deal with the transition to and pressures of WFH. Amidst the lockdown, there were modifications to their work, with all employees expected to be flexible and contribute to the smooth running of the company as far as possible:

P: ...it started with them saying that you have to do a few hours of work, but then slowly they said work is going this way, so you'll have to do this properly, people are not working properly, there aren't enough calls and working hours. And the thing is...all kinds of work was coming in...like if the pickup department isn't working, you'd have to handle pickups...

Me: So whatever department wasn't fully working...

P: Yes, then it became 10 am to 7 pm...they kept saying you're coming late, not doing enough work... full 9 hours, then it became 11 hours, from 10 am to 9 pm...

Prachi reported that working for 11 h quickly became the norm. This was 2 h more than their office hours. In part, this was because the employer's surveillance required them to keep records of all the work they were doing, which although not acknowledged as such was work in itself. Prachi's work also became more complicated at this time because deliveries were restricted in various parts of India. She worked directly with her senior manager to ensure smooth operations:

P: He [the senior manager] kept calling me to say talk to this person, that person, do this, get this list, arrange a pickup, why is this not happening, what's available in what state, what speed is it functioning at, why are pickups delayed, how much time will it take...and I mean he would call me at 7 pm, 8 pm, even 9 pm, and I would have to pick up...And Monday, even Sunday he would call and I would have to pick up...if he would say on Sunday, send emails, I would have to send emails...

Under normal circumstances, this work out of office hours would have been compensated as overtime work, but the company did not account for this.

P: ...the biggest problem was that I felt that if I'm giving two extra hours...in the office, that would earn us OT (overtime)...so I think I may be getting something out of this. But afterwards they said, no, we hadn't decided that...two extra hours were to work from home because you weren't coming to the office.

While they expected flexibility from the employees, the employers, Prachi felt, did not understand that working from home cannot exactly be the same as working at the office:

P: ...it's not possible no matter how much we try, things get merged. In my house too, my mother was very ill, I couldn't just ignore that. If I was in the office, maybe my family wouldn't call me or they would just call and tell. But when I'm there, I can't just ignore.

Instead, the company decided to set specific targets for each employee and told them that not meeting these targets would lead to deductions from their salaries. The targets included confirming 130–150 orders per month, fulfillment of 75% of deliveries, and at least 1 h of call time per day. The number of orders and the fulfillment of deliveries was beyond the employees' control, it entirely depended on the ability and willingness of customers to purchase and on the regulation of deliveries. They did have some control over how long they were on the phone for. Prachi was given a warning by her managers for keeping calls very short, this bemused her:

P: Once they tagged me – “call timing short” – I was like what does that mean. I don't even pay attention to this, I'm so involved with my work. Someone said, “Prachi, have you seen they tagged you?” I didn't know, I never checked calling. They said you have talked very little on calls, you have a lot of calls, but very short ones (laughs)...I was like what does that mean, I was making my report all day long.

But then the employers started chastising other employees for not speaking long enough to the customers. Frustrated by the futility of this target, the employees started calling one another—“Yes, that was the solution (laughs)...I'd get calls, “Prachi, what's up?” So I got a lot of incoming, I would say “What are you doing?” “Nothing, just increasing your call time...” That was our way, we talked to one another.” The near impossibility of control over the other targets meant that most employees were unable to meet them, for which the employers enforced 20% salary deductions. Prachi was infuriated by this measure; while she was aware of the employer's threat to deduct salaries, she did not think they would actually do it. She felt it drove the point home that the employers were only concerned with their profit, not with the employees' welfare, even at this very difficult time. She retaliated when deductions were made from her salary of Rs. 20,000 (approximately GBP 200) per month:

P: For me, I look at all orders, so they set a percentage for me, that I should have the ratio of 75 per cent for deliveries. I agreed on 65–75 per cent overall, I said I'll do it. So then when they deducted, I said check your records, I've done what I agreed to do, so why have you deducted. They said, this is for everyone. But I said, I'm not concerned with everyone, I did what I said I would do.

After confirming with the accounts person that her salary had indeed been deducted, Prachi decided to protest by not working the next day. This form of protest—impulsive resignations—is something that I have noted in my previous research too, suggesting that workers in precarious work may resist their working conditions in this manner in the absence of more traditional forms of resistance, such as, unions, strikes, and so forth

(Islam, 2021). The strategy seemed to have worked because her manager negotiated returning the deducted amount to her. She still did not get the salary increment she had been promised she would receive after her annual appraisal. Prachi felt that even though the company managed to keep afloat, and perhaps even sell more, during the lockdown, they used the excuse of the pandemic to lower the employees' salaries and to maximize their profit.

## 6 | "IF I WOULD HAVE BEEN A GUY NA, MY LIFE WOULD HAVE BEEN DIFFERENT": GENDER AT HOME AND WORK

This disruptive period in which Prachi had to negotiate with the contingencies of lockdown at both work and home led her to reflect on her position at these two sites. She evaluated her experiences of restricted access to space and time at home and of marginalization at work through the lens of gender. At home, despite long working hours, she was compelled to participate in housework. In part, this was because Prachi thought her family did not understand the nature of her work. They thought since she was at home with a laptop, rather than in an office, she did not actually have to work—"They would think that I am focusing on work because I want to ignore household." But Prachi also thought that this attitude whereby her work was not taken seriously could be attributed to her being a woman—"...being a girl, if you're working, it doesn't matter, you still have to handle a house. If you're managing both well, then only you're great. If you're only earning money, then still you're nil." One of Prachi's senior female colleagues had to similarly juggle the simultaneous pressures of home and work:

P: And let me tell you, if there's a man or a boy, if they were working, then honestly they would have been given space and respect. But I'm a girl and this other person who works with me she's a female, she has a baby, she had to manage work, manage the baby, and manage the home. And being at home meant you had to manage it all together. It was the same for me. I said I can't do this work...But they [the family] thought why are you doing this, don't do it, my sister would say, leave it, you just sit here with a box [referring to the laptop].

The compulsion to contribute to housework was exacerbated by the work stress Prachi was experiencing at the time, restricted space, as well as lack of care from her family members:

Me: Do you think this issue of space at home, if you were a bo—

P: Yes, there's no respect. What I'm doing is bread earning, you should respect it in the way I do, it is respectable work for me, even you're having food by this only na.

Me: Yeah so if a guy was working from home he'd have space...

P: Yes! "Your brother is working, don't disturb him, give him tea." They were looking after me too but there is a different way of doing things, it's very different...If I worked so much and everything, if I would have been a guy, it would be all different.

Prachi's younger brother continued his employment as a contracted peon at a government office for part of the lockdown. Comparing their situations, Prachi commented that even though she earns twice the amount her brother does, he gets to take packed lunch with him to work every day. While Prachi is the main earner for the family, she has to labor herself to reproduce her labor, otherwise she is accused of "being a queen":

P: My younger brother, he goes to the office, he takes proper food with him. I haven't been bringing anything for the last few days because then they'll say I just get up and go like a queen, that I don't do any work. Tell me, my timing is 10 am, I have to leave at 9 am, I get up at 8 am, get ready, I don't have time to make food. To top all that, I have a lot of health issues. I work even when I have fever, typhoid, pain...because I can't let my salary get deducted, I know my family needs it. But all I get to hear is you don't do any housework, what am I supposed to do?!

Prachi also felt that although her full salary goes toward the maintenance of the family, she has no say over how that money is spent--“...if there was a boy in my place, he would have the last say in the house, touchwood, but just because I'm a girl, I don't get it.” These experiences of being assigned a lower status at home were replicated at work too:

P: We hear the same things at home and...Sometimes I feel like I am being used by my family and it's the same thing in the office. I do all the work but Mahesh [colleague] gets all the credit. I really feel it, it's the same thing. If I was a boy, I would have had more value, more promotions.

At work, Prachi reflected, there seems to be an understanding that as a woman, you are only working as a “hobby,” not as a “career or responsibility,” and therefore, women are looked over for salary increments and promotions:

P: One boy who works below me, his salary is Rs. 25,000, he's just a caller. The theory is that he's a guy, he must be handling his house.

Me: So if a girl is earning, it's just like that...

P: Yeah, I feel like most people, no matter how educated they are, this is the thinking in India that if a girl is earning, she's just earning for herself only.

Prachi noted that contrary to what employers may think, many young women like her are actually the main earners for their families, that is, they are working in order to sustain their households, rather than just to while away time. She felt frustrated that her efforts and contributions went unrecognized both at work and home. She also reflected that this situation was exacerbated during the lockdown period when she was physically at home and working remotely because it made her work further invisible. On the one hand, her family, while relying on her salary, did not understand and respect what she was doing. On the other hand, her employer could further marginalize her even as she adapted quickly to work amidst challenging circumstances.

## 7 | RETURN TO WORK

After a strict lockdown for over 2 months, India started gradually easing restrictions with “Unlock 1.0” commencing on 8 June, 2020. It was shortly after this that Prachi's employer decided to reopen their office. This first phase of reopening was challenging since there was very limited availability of public transport in Delhi—buses could only carry 20 passengers at a time and the metro was still completely shut. Prachi had to either rely on her brother to drive her on his bike or share an auto-rickshaw with other passengers for her work commute. Nevertheless, she was glad that the office had reopened, and she could reclaim some time and space for herself:

P: Now we're going to work, we go at a certain time and come back at a certain time, so some time is our own, we're out of that space [of home]. This was making us crazy; the work was making us mental.



Her employers have tried to maintain the lockdown norm of “two hours extra” without any overtime pay, citing lockdown-induced problems with the company. Although Prachi is worried about her employment situation, she has not given into her employers’ demand for longer hours of work—“They should know that was work from home. I can’t sit here until 9 pm and why should I anyway.” She is still negotiating her annual increment, particularly because if she has a higher salary package, she will be able to earn better in her next job. This has proven difficult because she has continued to feel marginalized at work:

P: I don’t know what to do, how to change my circumstances, so my salary reaches Rs. 21-22,000 [GBP 210-220]. So all round, including my incentive, it gets to Rs. 24-25,000 [GBP 240-250]. A month ago I thought it will get to Rs. 22,000 [GBP 220], so it will get to what I think it should be, now they’re saying it can’t be that much. I don’t know what they’ve decided, I wasn’t there for three days. It’s not like if someone is ill and doesn’t come in for three days that they would say welcome back or make warm feeling. It’s more that you get ignored if you’re not there for three days. In the time you’re absent, work progresses, and you’re not there...that’s the scene.

Like many workers, Prachi has felt more vulnerable as a result of the pandemic. She is keen to complete her Master’s degree but has not had the time to prepare her course assignments or study for exams because she has been busy proving herself as a worker—“Now think about it, a whole year I’ve worked there, what have I done for myself?” As much as Prachi would like to pursue higher education and a “creative” career in the media, she is aware that her employment is the only guarantee for her family’s sustenance—“...in my situation, I can’t run after my hobby, I don’t have time for myself.” Ideally, Prachi would have either earned a promotion or moved on to another higher paid job by now, but the pandemic has slowed down her plans. She is unsure of the long-term consequences of this disruption.

## 8 | CONCLUSION AND FURTHER RESEARCH

As a lower middle class worker who has access to the kind of work that can be done at home but none of the supporting infrastructure, Prachi’s experiences may be lost in discussions about “white-collar” workers working from home and “blue collar” workers being unemployed or at risk at work during the pandemic. Prachi’s case demonstrates some of the difficulties that workers who are new entrants to service work have been facing in recent times. Her case is particularly important for considering the gendered implications of the ways in which work has changed during the pandemic. While the practice of WFH enabled Prachi to continue her employment, it also highlighted lack of infrastructure which I classify as both physical—space, Internet, equipment—and social—rest, care, time.

Compelled to WFH during the crisis, Prachi noted intensification of gender inequalities at both work and home. Although WFH policies are often presented as encouraging work/life balance and as particularly enabling for women, Prachi’s experience shows that being at home compelled a return to gender normativity that she had previously managed to challenge through her employment (also see, Safdar & Yasmin, 2020). There was also further threat to her visibility at work even as she worked for longer hours—not working in the same space as her teammates, Prachi felt subject to increased surveillance and left out from decision making. Indeed, Prachi found little that was of advantage in this period of WFH and was relieved to return to the office. Prachi’s situation highlights that work transitions need to be analyzed in their wider context, taking account of physical and social infrastructure that workers have access to. Further research is needed to seek underrepresented perspectives, particularly of workers in the Global South, to contribute to emerging discussions about the future of work.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The author would like to thank Prachi for being generous with her time and eloquent with her words.

## DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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## ENDNOTE

<sup>1</sup> The name of the respondent has been changed to protect her identity. The interview with Prachi was conducted primarily in Hindi. The interview was translated to and transcribed in English by the author. Prachi's use of English words, phrases, and sentences have been underlined in the quotes used in this article.

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**How to cite this article:** Islam, A. (2021). "Two hours extra for working from home": Reporting on gender, space, and time from the Covid-field of Delhi, India. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 28(S2), 405–414. <https://doi.org/10.1111/gwao.12617>